DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 257 745 SO 016 558

TITLE	Americans and the Arts 1984: Highlights from a Nationwide Survey of Public Opinion.
INSTITUTION	Harris (Louis) and Associates, Inc., New York, N.Y.
SPONS AGENCY	Philip Morris Inc., New York, NY.
REPORT NO	ISBN-0-934037-00-0
PUB DATE	84
NOTE	31p.; Survey conducted by the National Research Center for the Arts, an affiliate of Louis Harris and Associates. For full survey, see SO 016 559.
AVAILABLE FROM	American Council for the Arts, Publications Department, 570 Seventh Ave., New York, NY 10018 ($3.00; quantity discounts available).
PUB TYPE	Reports - Research/Technical (143)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Art Education; Arts Centers; Attendance; Cultural Activities; Cultural Centers; Dance Education; Educational Needs; Elementary Secondary Education; Financial Support; *Fine Arts; Leisure Time; Majority Attitudes; Music Education; National Surveys; Participation; *Public Opinion; Public Support; Recreation; Television; Trend Analysis; Videotape Cassettes; Videotape Recorders

ABSTRACT

Highlights of a nationwide public opinion survey concerning the interest and involvement of Americans in the arts are summarized. Telephone interviews were conducted with 1,504 adults. Results showed that the arts are indisputably a part of the mainstream of American life. Because Americans have limited leisure time, the arts must increasingly compete with other leisure industries for attention. Despite this, Americans continue to turn out for most arts presentations in ever-increasing numbers, although lately the rate of arts attendance and participation has been slower than in the late 1970's. Even though over 90 percent believe that to see a live performance is more meaningful and exciting than watching it on television, both television and videocassette recordings present a growing challenge to the arts. Americans show a firm commitment to the arts and view them as a source of deep individual satisfaction. They want more arts facilities and presentations, and are willing to finance the arts at every government level. There is high public commitment to keeping the arts as an integral part of the school curriculum. (RM)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED257745

AMERICANS AND THE ARTS

1984

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Christopher T. Cory

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

SO 016 338

Conducted by the National Research Center of the Arts, an affiliate of Louis Harris and Associates

The Americans and the Arts, 1984 survey was sponsored by Philip Morris Incorporated

2

AMERICANS AND THE ARTS

1984

Highlights from a nationwide survey
of public opinion

Conducted by the National Research
Center of the Arts, an affiliate of
Louis Harris and Associates

The Americans and the Arts 1984 survey was
sponsored by Philip Morris Incorporated

This booklet is published by Philip Morris Incorporated. Additional copies are available from the American Council for the Arts (ACA). Please send check for $3.00 per copy (includes postage and handling) to Publications Department, American Council for the Arts, 570 Seventh Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10018. Copies of the full survey, including analysis, tables, and survey methodology, are also available for a postage and handling fee of $5.00. For both publications, volume discounts are available. For further information, write to ACA Books at the ACA, or phone (212) 354-6655.

Copyright © 1984 Philip Morris Incorporated

ISBN: 0-934037-00-0

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION By LOUIS HARRIS

5–6

"INDISPENSABLE, NOT ELITE"
By HAMISH MAXWELL

7

DWINDLING LEISURE,
HARDER CHOICES

8–9

ATTENDANCE AT THE ARTS:
STILL RISING

Going to the movies
Live theater
Live popular music
Live opera or musical theater
Live classical or symphonic music
Live performances of dance
Art museums

10–12

THE GROWING CHALLENGE
OF TELEVISION AND VCRs

12–15

AMERICANS' VIEW OF THE ARTS:
A FIRM COMMITMENT

15–17

INCREASE IN PERSONAL PARTICIPATION

Photography
Needlepoint, weaving and other handiwork
Playing a musical instrument
Painting, drawing and the graphic arts
Creative writing—stories or poems
Singing in a choir or other choral group
Ballet or modern dance
Working with a local theater group
Making pottery or ceramics
Sculpting or working with clay

17–19

THE JOB TO BE DONE: WHERE THE ARTS FALL SHORT

19–23

FINANCING THE ARTS: WILLING TO PAY MORE

23–27

THE ROLE OF THE ARTS IN THE NATION'S SCHOOLS

27–29

INTRODUCTION

By LOUIS HARRIS

This book summarizes the fourth in a series of nationwide public opinion surveys on the interest and involvement of Americans in the arts. Like the previous studies, which were undertaken in 1973, 1975 and 1980, this one was sponsored by Philip Morris Incorporated.

This survey amplifies a truly historic finding first documented by the earlier studies. The arts are indisputably a part of the mainstream of American life. Gone is the day when they could be considered a haven of the elite or the priveleged few. The new data show conclusively that the arts provide pleasure, uplift and a quickening of the creative senses to a larger majority of the public than, for example, go to a sports event in the course of a year or have ever voted in a national election.

Moreover, the vast numbers of people who attend arts presentations or take part directly in a creative activity have not merely held steady in the dozen years since the first study was done; they have increased substantially. And they have done so in the face of inflation, high taxes, high unemployment, cuts in services, challenges from new technologies, and a decrease in leisure time.

The arts, Americans are saying loud and clear, are indispensable—a boon to their sense of well being and a nourishment to their spirit.

It is appropriate that a survey with these results should be sponsored by Philip Morris, where that view of the arts has long been a tenet of corporate policy.

For more than a quarter of a century, the company has put money and hard work into supporting art museums and exhibitions, symphony orchestras and music groups,

dance companies, theater groups, and a host of other arts organizations. I have seen one aspect of this commitment up close by working with Philip Morris in my capacity as chairman of the American Council for the Arts.

Like a handful of other corporate arts pioneers, Philip Morris believes in the arts because it wants to share in their sense of innovation and risk, without which no business can thrive. It wants to be a good neighbor to the communities where its employees and friends live and where it does business. It knows, as the current study reiterates, that one of the best ways to enhance the quality of life in those communities and to promote their social and economic vigor is through the arts.

A note on the survey: This fourth survey of Americans and the Arts was conducted among a cross-section of 1,504 men and women 18 years of age and over, constituting a national sampling. The purpose was to update key areas of the previous surveys and to uncover new dimensions of public opinion regarding the arts. Participants were scientifically selected to include proportionate demographic groupings relative to age, sex, race, education, income, community size and region, with weighting to conform with the entire adult population of the United States. Interviews were conducted by telephone during March 1984.

"INDISPENSABLE, NOT ELITE"

Philip Morris supported the first of these studies in 1973, about ten years after we began our art support program. It confirmed our hunch that the arts are not elite pastimes but indispensable, in fact, for most people. The surveys proved useful to arts organizations, and as we continued them we found that the arts are still growing; for example, more people participate in the arts every year than attend professional sports.

Corporations that back the arts today are no longer breaking new ground. It is clearer than ever that the arts create a stimulating climate that is good for business—and for the well-being of people everywhere.

—Hamish Maxwell,
Chairman and
Chief Executive Officer,
Philip Morris Incorporated

DWINDLING LEISURE, HARDER CHOICES

In the America of the mid-1980s, the arts must be viewed in a context of striking social and economic change. A transformation is taking place in the national sense of time and how it is utilized.

This study investigated the impact on the arts of the widespread growth of families in which both husbands and wives hold down jobs, partly in order to augment their budgets and partly because more and more women are seeking the outlet of work. In addition, as the nation's economy has emerged from a recession and become more robust, the length of the work week has increased.

The result, the study found, is that most Americans have markedly less time left over in which to relax, socialize, pursue arts activities, attend spectator sports or engage in other discretionary interests. Pressures are mounting on people to be more selective in their use of free time. The arts, vis-à-vis other leisure industries, must increasingly compete for attention.

The results showed:

- *Longer work weeks for Americans:* a median of 47.3 hours in 1984, up from 46.9 hours in 1980, 43.1 in 1975, and 40.6 in 1973.
- *Less leisure time:* a median of 18.1 hours in 1984, down from 19.2 hours in 1980, 24.3 in 1975, and 26.2 in 1973. This means that the average American's leisure time has shrunk by eight hours a week, or 31%, over the past decade.

The squeeze on leisure is most pronounced among the "baby boom" generation, the populous age group from 30 to 49. This group,

which typically has all the pressures of growing children and both spouses in jobs, devotes an average of 50.4 hours a week to work. Consequently, it has an average of only 16.0 hours a week of free time. But the survey uncovered even more significant variations from the national pattern among other social groups:

- *The elderly:* People 65 and over report having a generous 25.4 hours a week of leisure time available, compared with work time of only 20.5 hours. More than any other group, the elderly are seeking activities to fill their leisure. This represents a challenge as well as an opportunity for the arts to reach older citizens with performances and exhibitions and to tap their creative talents in participatory activities.
- *Women:* Compared with men, women work less (44.9 hours a week) but also have far less leisure time (15.6 hours). The reason is that they must commonly combine a job with the major responsibilities for child-rearing and upkeep of the home. A major implication for the arts is that women are likely to find leisure activities more precious and urgent than men.
- *Blacks and Hispanics:* While blacks work no more than 43.2 hours a week, they also report only 12.2 hours of leisure time available. Hispanics report working 43.5 hours a week, with 18.0 hours of leisure time. By contrast, whites work 47.7 hours a week but have more hours, 18.8, of leisure. As with women, blacks and Hispanics have a greater burden of homemaking and life-sustaining tasks that drain their free time.

ATTENDANCE AT THE ARTS: STILL RISING

Despite the steadily shrinking amount of leisure time available, Americans continue to turn out for most arts presentations in ever increasing numbers. Attendance at the arts is now thoroughly established as a mass phenomenon. Each major type of event can boast an audience in the tens of millions, and in nearly every case it is still growing.

The rate of growth is not as steep as it was during the years between 1975 and 1980. But it is consistent enough to demonstrate that the cultural explosion of the late 1970s has carried over into the 1980s with substantial momentum, surmounting the greater difficulty of raising money from both public and private sources.

- *Going to the movies:* 78% of adult Americans (18 and over) say they attend motion pictures, up from 75% in 1980 and 70% in 1975. (Comparable figures for 1973 were unavailable.) Translated into numbers, this means that 134 million adults are moviegoers.
- *Live theater:* Plays, pantomimes and other theatrical presentations attract 67% of the American public (115 million people), an increase from 65% in 1980 and 53% in 1975.
- *Live popular music:* Attendance at concerts given by pop singers, bands or rock groups has risen to 60% (103 million) from 53% in 1980 and 46% in 1975.
- *Live opera or musical theater:* 35% (60 million) of all adults report attending live performances of opera or musical theater, a notable increase from 25% in 1980. (There are no comparable data for 1975.)

12

- *Live classical or symphonic music:* The share of adult Americans attending live classical or symphonic presentations is 34% (58 million), compared with 26% in 1980 and 25% in 1975.
- *Live performances of dance:* Presentations of ballet or modern, folk or ethnic dance also draw 34% of Americans (58 million), up from 25% in 1980 and 23% in 1975.

The one exception to this pattern of growth emerges in the case of art museums. Attendance at exhibits of paintings, drawings and sculpture at art museums is 58% (100 million). This is slightly lower than the 60% reported in 1980, although higher than the 56% in 1975.

Statistically, art museum attendance would seem to have plateaued. It nevertheless remains very high, representing close to 6 out of every 10 adults in America.

As all of the arts achieve mass penetration in the U.S., their audiences tend to broaden from a core of regulars to a growing margin of people who attend relatively infrequently. Of those who go to live popular music concerts, for example, 4% say they attend more than ten events a year; 23% attend only two or three. The corresponding figures for 1980 were 5% and 20%.

This explains why, with overall attendance at arts events continuing to rise, the median number of events attended by members of the public has declined somewhat. Median attendance, after climbing from 2.0 events in 1975 to 2.8 in 1980, is now down to 2.4.

Each kind of art presentation attracts its own particular audience. Movies appeal most dramatically to young people in the 18 to 29 age group; live opera and musical theater draw more heavily from the 30 to 64 age group. Both live classical music and art

S13

museums attract the better-educated, higher-income audiences. Classical music is strong on the East and West coasts, among city dwellers, and mostly in the 30 to 49 age group; art museums also draw their public from the Midwest, from suburbs, and from the young.

But whatever the differences in audiences, a single compelling pattern overrides them all: the high degree of overlap among heavy attenders of all types of arts presentations. To take only one example, the survey found that among heavy attenders of live classical music, 93% are also heavy attenders of movies, live theater and art museums; 71% are heavy attenders of live opera and musical theater, and 67% of live dance performances.

Such overlap tends to support the argument in favor of constructing more cultural centers containing multiple arts facilities. People who are attracted to, say, classical music in a given setting would find theater, opera, dance, and other offerings attractive in nearby facilities. Hence, the aggregate audience for all the arts would likely be increased.

THE GROWING CHALLENGE OF TELEVISION AND VCRs

Live attendance at arts events, of course, hardly represents the total exposure of the American public to the arts. Another important form of exposure is at home, in front of the television screen.

In an attempt to gauge the impact of this growing factor in arts presentations, the survey undertook to determine how many people view performances on TV and how frequently

they do so. No corresponding questions were asked in previous studies.

The findings are a tribute to the vitality of live arts presentations in a culture supposedly increasingly dominated by electronic media: in nearly every case the number who attend such presentations remains greater than those who watch on TV. By a margin of 90% to 9%, Americans believe that "to see something performed live on stage is more meaningful and exciting than watching it on TV."

- A large majority of adult Americans, 75%, watch movies on TV, but a larger share, 78% attend them live.
- Compared with 53% of the public who see theater on TV, 67% go to live performances.
- An audience of 57% watch pop concerts on TV, while 60% see them live.
- Compared with 21% who watch opera or musical theater on TV, 35% go to live performances.
- Dance is the one instance in which a larger aggregate audience (40%) watches on TV than attends live (34%).

Yet when it comes to the median number of performances viewed or attended, then live presentations simply cannot keep up with television, where a performance is available at the flip of a switch.

- The median attendance at movies is 4.3 a year, but the number viewed on TV is 13.6.
- For theater, the median is 3.4 performances live, but 5.6 on TV.
- Pop music concerts attract a median live attendance of 3.0, compared with 7.2 on TV.
- While the median live attendance at opera or musical theater is 2.1, the figure for TV is 2.4.
- In the case of classical music, the median is 2.5 for live concerts, 3.2 for TV.

■ Dance performances draw a median attendance of 2.2 in person, compared with 3.2 on TV.

Two relatively recent innovations in television technology help to account for the medium's growing importance as a purveyor of arts performances. One is cable service, on which the arts can be shown more often, at better hours, and for longer periods than on most VHF programming.

The study found that 47% of adult Americans subscribe to cable TV. Notably, heavy attenders of live arts performances tend to be more likely to be cable subscribers. And by 71% to 29%, cable subscribers say they would certainly or probably view arts presentations if more were offered on pay or cable TV.

Even more significant than cable are videocassette recorders (VCRs), which are found in 17% of American homes and are proliferating rapidly. Among heavy attenders of live arts presentations, ownership of VCRs rises to between 21% and 28%.

VCRs hold out an appealing prospect: that large numbers of people who attend memorable live performances or art exhibits will be able to experience those occassions again and again on videotape.

But what if such videotapes become a substitute for live presentations? And what if the playing of them in turn deprives performing artists of employment and income? Then the expansion of VCR ownership might become a threat instead of a boon to the arts. There are already signs of the increasing competition that VCRs pose to conventional means of reproducing arts performances.

■ The frequency with which people report buying records or tapes of classical music has not increased since 1980.

- The frequency with which people report listening to classical music on records or tapes has declined slightly since 1980.

To offset this trend and to protect the compensation of artists, it might become advisable to dedicate a substantial portion of VCR revenues to the promotion of more live performances. In addition, such measures could be taken as tailoring live performances more specifically to the needs of cable and VHF programming, and recording VCR tapes from live performances whenever possible.

AMERICANS' VIEW OF THE ARTS: A FIRM COMMITMENT

The rise in attendance and viewership of arts presentations is rooted in a firm national commitment to the arts. The study confirmed an overwhelming conviction that the arts are a vital part of people's existence, not only as an enrichment of the life of their communities but also as a source of deep individual satisfaction.

- An almost unanimous 94% to 5% majority of Americans subscribe to the view that "things like museums and theater and music performances make a community a better place to live in."
- A slightly larger majority of 95% to 4% are convinced that "museums are an important resource for the whole community, because they tell us so much about the art and history of different cultures or about science and our environment."
- By 92% to 7%, Americans believe "some means should be found to present more

317

performances of music, theater and dance in all parts of the country so that all Americans have an opportunity to attend."

One substantial reason for the high value placed on the arts is that, whether or not people say they are personally interested in them, they believe that the arts are a salutary element in the social fabric. A majority of 92% to 7% consider the arts important to the "quality of life" in their home community. An 89% to 10% majority consider the arts important to the "business and economy" of their community.

Moreover, by 72% to 27%, people also declare that if no arts were available in their home community, they themselves would miss the arts. Roughly 1 in 3 say they would miss the arts "very much."

The study verified a growing sense that "most people enjoy attending arts events." Americans agree with this statement by 77% to 21%, an increase from 72% to 24% in 1980 and 63% to 25% in 1975. This sense of enjoyment is borne out by people's responses to questions about what the arts mean in their own lives.

- A sizable majority of 75% to 22% say the arts "just give me pure pleasure to experience or to participate in."
- Another majority, 73% to 24%, feel that the arts "give you an uplift from everyday experiences."
- By 71% to 24%, people regard the arts as "a positive experience in a troubled world."
- By 65% to 30%, they believe the arts "allow you to find a source of creative expression and experience that is rare."

These results show that America's devotion to the arts is not only an objective, social phenomenon but an intensely subjective one as well. A vast majority of the adult population

appear to be seeking a fulfillment beyond everyday cares and concerns, and increasingly finding it in some form of art experience.

INCREASE IN PERSONAL PARTICIPATION

In addition to experiencing the arts as spectators or observers, Americans participate in a variety of art forms directly and personally. In the years between 1975 and 1980, the level of this participation rose dramatically, as detailed in previous studies. The 1984 survey revealed a much slower rate of increase, but one that still reflects an impressive upward trend involving vast numbers of people.

- *Photography:* the share of American adults who engage in photographic pursuits, which jumped sharply from 19% to 44% between 1975 and 1980, has now risen to 47%. This translates to a total of 80 million people.
- *Needlepoint, weaving and other handiwork:* the share of adults who do needlepoint, weaving and related handiwork is 44% (75 million), up from 42% in 1980 and 39% in 1975.
- *Playing a musical instrument:* the 31% (53 million) who play a musical instrument represent a marginal increase after a climb from 18% in 1975 to 30% in 1980.
- *Painting, drawing and the graphic arts:* 29% of adult Americans (50 million) paint, draw or are involved in the graphic arts, compared with 28% in 1980 and 22% in 1975.
- *Creative writing—stories or poems:* after rising from 13% in 1975 to 22% in 1980, the

share who write stories or poems stands at 25% (43 million).

- *Singing in a choir or other choral group:* voice as a form of creative expression is practiced by 22% (38 million), up from 21% in 1980 and 11% in 1975.
- *Ballet or modern dance:* the percentage of adults in the U.S. who pursue ballet or modern dance rose from 9% in 1975 to 20% in 1980, and has now gone to 21% (36 million).
- *Working with a local theater group:* local theater activities attract 7% of Americans (12 million), compared with 5% in 1980 and 3% in 1975.

Two areas show signs of a leveling off or a slight decline in participation:

- *Making pottery or ceramics:* the share of Americans engaged in pottery or ceramics, which rose from 8% in 1975 to 18% in 1980, has now gone to 17%. This still represents 29 million people.
- *Sculpting or working with clay:* after doubling from 5% in 1975 to 10% in 1980, the percentage who sculpt or work with clay is down to 9% (15 million).

A number of differences were noted between the practitioners of one art form and another. Those who write stories or poems, for instance, are concentrated most heavily among young people, in the West, in urban areas, and among women, blacks and Hispanics. The greatest proportion of those who pursue ballet or modern dance is found again in the cities, and among the young, women, blacks and Hispanics.

By contrast, those involved with needlepoint, weaving and other handiwork are more likely to be found in rural areas, among older people and the less well educated, and are

heavily concentrated among women.

Whoever the participant, direct involvement in the arts is nearly always costly, in terms of both time and money. Thus it is all the more significant that the study confirmed large—and in most cases growing—numbers of men and women willingly making such expenditures in a period marked by recession and increasing pressure on leisure time. Clearly, in American life today more and more people cherish the arts as a personal creative outlet.

THE JOB TO BE DONE: WHERE THE ARTS FALL SHORT

The previous surveys have traced a gratifying picture of growth and enrichment in the arts over the past decade. But precisely because America has become a more arts-sensitive society, each encouraging new set of statistics raises a keen sense of where the arts still fall short and what tasks still lie ahead.

Several questions in the 1984 study were designed to measure people's dual sense of progress and further need. The first concerned the accessibility of arts facilities to their homes.

- Of adult Americans, 68% say they have an easily accessible theater where plays or musicals are performed, up from 66% in 1980 and 58% in 1975.
- The share who report an easily accessible museum displaying painting or sculpture or offering scientific or historical exhibits is 60%, up from 57% in 1980 and 49% in 1975.
- A concert hall where concerts or operas are performed is easily accessible to 59%, compared with 53% in 1980 and 47% in 1975.

These figures point to a real gain over the past decade in the availability and accessibility of arts facilities. But when they are turned around, of course, they show that 32% of Americans do not have ready access to a theater, 40% lack a convenient museum, and 41% cannot easily get to a concert hall.

When asked whether there are enough facilities for creative activities in their communities—"things like local art and photography shows, street festivals, local music and drama groups, or craft groups"—55% answered yes. This is an improvement from the 49% who answered yes in 1973. But the share who still feel that there are "not enough" such facilities remains at the 1973 level of 42%.

An even more crucial gap occurs between the availability of arts facilities and the perceived adequacy of the events in them. Here a revealing comparison can be made with sports. A majority of 71% of Americans feel that the sports facilities in their home area are adequate. An almost identical 70% feel that there are enough sports events taking place in those facilities. When it comes to adult theater, museums and classical music, an aggregate of 62% feel the facilities in their area are adequate, but only 50% feel there are enough presentations in them.

In the case of eight specific types of arts presentations, the study found, that the numbers of people who feel they need more of them in their area are substantial, although consistently lower than in 1980.

- *Children's theater performances:* 59% of the public want more children's theater where they live, compared with 61% in 1980.
- *Outdoor arts festivals:* 49% of Americans want to see more of these, compared with 51% in 1980.

- *Painting and sculpture exhibitions:* The demand for such exhibitions is at 47%, down from 50% in 1980.
- *Plays, musicals, pantomimes and other adult theater performances:* 45% express a desire to see more theater, compared with 47% in 1980.
- *Ballet or modern dance:* demand moved to 43% from 44% in 1980.
- *Classical music concerts and recitals:* more performances would be welcomed by 42%, down from 46% in 1980.
- *Folk or ethnic dances:* 41% want more performances, versus 43% in 1980.
- *Popular music:* only 34% say they need more performances of rock, country and other popular music presentations, down from 37% in 1980.

Despite the broadening scope of activity throughout the nation, then, it is apparent that the arts have not come up with the performances, exhibits and showings that people would expect to be forthcoming when they see new facilities in their area.

Certain key segments of the public—blacks, Hispanics and women—feel far more strongly than other Americans that current arts presentations are inadequate.

- Where 56% of all whites want more children's theater, the figure for blacks is 71%; for Hispanics, 76%. More painting and sculpture is desired by 43% of whites, but by 60% of blacks and by 72% of Hispanics. In the case of ballet or modern dance, the demand is 39% among whites, 60% among blacks and 65% among Hispanics. Similar differences occur in all of the eight categories above.
- Compared with 43% of men who desire more painting and sculpture, 50% of women

express such a desire. More adult theater would be welcomed by 41% of men, but by 48% of women. On ballet and modern dance, 37% of men feel the need for more; 49% of women do.

These variations suggest that the arts hold a special place in the interests of blacks, Hispanics and women, giving them a sense of fulfillment that they do not find in other parts of their lives. In addition, the responses of blacks and Hispanics indicate that the arts are often presented in facilities or in parts of their communities where they do not always feel welcome or comfortable. The latter point, particularly, warrants special attention by governmental and private arts institutions alike.

A range of considerations can deter people from attending arts and cultural presentations. As steadily as such attendance has risen, it will not achieve optimum levels until these deterrents are overcome.

The study established that many of the concerns cited for not going to arts events—difficulty of finding a parking space, fears about the safety of the neighborhood, the expense of hiring a baby sitter—have declined in importance somewhat since 1980. But two significant factors remain undiminished:

- By 64% to 33%, Americans believe that "the cost of going to theaters or concert halls is the main reason most people don't go more often to performances of plays, music, or dance."
- A substantial 40% of the public believe "the arts can only be enjoyed by a privileged few who have the financial means to attend arts events," although 57% do not feel that way.

Although inflation subsided considerably after the recession at the start of the decade, years of rising prices have left an indelible

24

impression on potential audiences for live arts presentations. For some, the cost of admission creates a forbiddingly high threshold. This suggests that special efforts to assist the elderly and the less privileged to attend arts events have never been more important.

Many of the problems faced by the arts today are in the nature of "growing pains," inherent in the increased public demands being placed on arts institutions. Some can be resolved through creative adaptation to new realities. But most, from the cost of tickets to the availability of more facilities, call for more than ingenuity. Inescapably, an adequate response to the challenge of larger audiences will require additional funding.

FINANCING THE ARTS: WILLING TO PAY MORE

During the period since the 1980 survey, officials of the Reagan Administration have argued forcefully that arts organizations should rely more heavily on private financial support and expect less help from the government. Perhaps influenced by this, Americans increasingly perceive arts organizations—theater groups, opera companies, symphony orchestras, ballet or modern dance troupes, and art museums—to be dependent on private contributions, rather than requiring government funds or being self-supporting.

- *Dependent on private contributions:* the portion of the public who believe theater groups to be dependent on private help has risen from 42% in 1980 to 49%. For opera companies, the rise has been from 39% to

48%; for symphony orchestras, 41% to 47%; for ballet or modern dance troupes, 38% to 45%; and for art museums, 37% to 44%.

- *Government support:* the number of Americans who believe that government funds are needed by theater groups has gone from 5% in 1980 to 6%. In the case of every other type of organization, the number has fallen—for opera companies (from 6% to 4%), symphony orchestras (from 8% to 7%), ballet or modern dance troupes (from 6% to 5%), and art museums (from 24% to 20%).
- *Self supporting:* the portion who regard arts organizations as self supporting has fallen in every case—theater groups (from 34% to 27%), opera companies (from 31% to 25%), symphony orchestras (from 29% to 24%), ballet or modern dance troupes (from 34% to 30%), and art museums (from 13% to 9%).

Quite apart from these perceived patterns of support, a solid majority of Americans are convinced that all sources, public and private, should provide assistance to arts organizations. And the data make clear that most people do not share the funding priorities of the current Administration. Instead of seeking a reduction in public spending, they favor a boost at every governmental level.

- In the case of the federal government, 55% declare that it should contribute to arts groups, an increase from 50% in 1980. The number who favor state-level arts funding is 64%, compared with 60% in 1980. At the municipal and county level, 67% are for support of the arts, up from 64% in 1980.
- As for funding from the private sector, 77% are of the opinion that business should help the arts, compared with 72% in 1980; 81% want to see foundations contribute, up from

79% in 1980; and a notably high 86% favor individual giving, up from 84% in 1980.

A further sign of the public's desire for more government participation is its 62% response in favor of an incentive plan for funding arts organizations (59% were in favor in 1980). Under such a plan, the government would match $1 for every $3 raised by an arts institution from private sources.

While a majority of Americans oppose direct government support for individual artists—musicians, painters, dancers, actors and others—the level of opposition is lower than in 1980. Approximately 60% were against such aid in 1980, but the number now stands at around 57%.

At the same time, the portion of the public who believe that corporations should help individual artists has risen from 57% in 1980 to a current 63%. Taken together, the attitudes on government and corporate support indicate a growing realization that the health of the arts as a whole requires care and attention to individual artists as well as to institutions.

A major finding of the study is that, to an impressive degree, Americans do not simply look to outside entities for financial support of the arts but readily assume a personal responsibility. This includes, but is not limited to, taking on a heavier tax burden.

Participants in the survey were informed that the federal government spends more than $700 per capita annually on defense, $130 for education, and no more than 70¢ on the arts. They were then asked if they would be willing to pay more in federal taxes to support arts and cultural activities and facilities.

- By 53% to 45%, Americans would agree to pay an additional $25 a year in federal taxes to help support the arts. This is an increase

over the 51% to 45% response in 1980 and almost exactly reverses the 41% to 53% response in 1975.

- By 61% to 38%, the public is willing to pay an additional $15 in taxes for the arts. This compares with a 59% to 39% willingness in 1980 and a 46% to 50% reluctance in 1975.
- When it comes to $10 in additional taxes, a sizable 66% to 32% majority are in favor, up from 65% to 33% in 1980 and 51% to 44% in 1975.
- An overwhelming 72% to 26% are willing to pay $5 more in taxes. The majority in 1980 was 70% to 28%; in 1975, 58% to 37%.

The study also sought to determine the patterns and amounts of individual contributions being made by Americans to arts organizations. No such inquiry was included in previous studies. Among other things, the results reveal that those who most frequently attend arts presentations are especially generous in contributing over and above what they pay at the box office.

- A total of 27% of adults in the country report making a contribution to the arts within the past year. Among college graduates, the percentage is 49%. Of those whose annual income is $35,000 to $50,000, 40% contributed; in the $50,000-and-over group, the figure rises to 54%. Notably high levels of giving are found among heavy attenders of classical music performances (64%), opera and musical theater (61%), art museums (53%), dance performances (51%), and theater (50%). Among heavy attenders of popular music performances, the level falls to 38%.
- The median contribution given by individuals nationwide during the past year is $48.50. In the West, this rises to $66.30.

Among college graduates, the figure is $67.30. In the $35,000 to $50,000 income groups, it is $64.70; for $50,000 and over, $76.60. Again, high figures are reported by heavy attenders of opera and musical theater ($97.70), dance performances ($97.00), classical music performances ($87.60), art museums ($85.30), theater ($74.30), and popular music ($66.20).

A majority of 67% of Americans believe that corporations should match the individual contributions their employees make to the arts. Employer matching is now common for contributions to education, and some companies have begun similar programs for the arts. The mandate for more to do so is clear-cut.

Indeed, a powerful and wide-reaching message is conveyed by the survey results. Individual Americans do not exempt themselves from the task of broadening the national base of support for the arts, but they clearly expect all other segments of society to step forward as well. Individual giving cannot do the job alone. It needs help from sources in both the public and private sectors, particularly corporate contributions and government.

THE ROLE OF THE ARTS IN THE NATION'S SCHOOLS

Where should the arts fit into public education? Since 1980, under the combined effects of economic stress and changing federal policies, many school systems have been hard-hit by budget cutbacks that in turn have jeopardized arts programs. Yet the study found high public commitment to keeping the arts as an integral part of the school curriculum.

- A nearly unanimous majority of adult Americans, 91%, believe that children in school should "be exposed to theater, music, dance, exhibitions of painting and sculpture, and similar cultural events." This is the same as that for 1975.
- The number of people who believe that the arts should be taught as regular, full-credit courses has increased since 1980 in the case of four specific activities: writing stories and poems (from 79% to 83%), playing a musical instrument (from 78% to 80%), drawing, painting, or sculpting (from 75% to 78%), and acting (from 59% to 60%).
- Support for full-credit courses in other areas has declined somewhat since 1980: music appreciation (from 75% to 74%), voice and singing (also from 75% to 74%), art appreciation (from 72% to 69%), photography or film making (from 61% to 58%), modern dance or movement (from 55% to 53%), making pottery, ceramics, and other crafts (from 52% to 50%), and needlepoint and weaving (from 46% to 39%).
- A substantial 74% of Americans affirm that such courses, whether for credit or not, "should be paid for by the school system as part of the regular school budget." This is almost level with the 75% who felt that way in 1980.

Despite some marginal declines, the responses make it amply clear that most people do not want the arts relegated to a peripheral role in the classroom, nor do they believe that arts programs should have to hinge on the uncertainties of funding from outside the school budget. In the education of the country's young people, the arts are viewed as they are in nearly every other phase of American life—as indispensable.

Philip Morris U.S.A.
Philip Morris International
Miller Brewing Company
The Seven-Up Company
Mission Viejo Realty Group Inc.